REV. DR. TALMAGE.

THE BROOKLYN DIVINE'S SUNDAY SERMON

Subject: "Sprig of Heart's-Ease."

TEXT: *"And His Disciples went and told Jesus."*—Matthew xiv. 12.

An outrageous assassination had just taken place. To appease a revengeful woman, King Herod ordered the death of that noble, self-sacrificing Christian, John the Baptist. The group of the disciples were thrown into grief and dismay. They felt themselves utterly defenseless. There was no authority to which they could appeal, and yet grief must always find expression. If there be no human ear to hear it, then the agonized soul will cry it aloud to the winds and the woods and the waters. But there was an ear that was willing to listen. There is a tender pathos, and at the same time a most admirable picture, in the words of my text: "They went and told Jesus." He could understand all their grief, and He immediately soothed it. Our burdens are not more than half so heavy to carry if another shoulder is thrust under the other end of them. Here we find Christ, His brow shadowed with grief, standing amid the group of disciples, who, with tears, and violent gesticulations, and wringing of hands, and outcry of bereavement, are expressing their woe. Raphael, with his skillful brush putting upon the wall of a palace some scene of sacred story, gave not so skillful a stroke as when the plain hand of the evangelist writes: "They went and told Jesus."

The old Goths and Vandals once came down upon Italy from the north of Europe, and they upset the gardens, and they broke down the altars, and swept away everything that was good and beautiful. So there is ever and anon in the history of all the sons and daughters of our race an incursion of rough-handed troubles that come to plunder and ransack and put to the torch all that men highly prize. There is no cave so deeply cleft into the mountains as to allow us shelter, and the foot of fleetest courser cannot bear us beyond the quick pursuit. The arrows they put to the strings fly with unerring dart, until we fall pierced and stunned.

I feel that I bring to you a most appropriate message. I mean to bind up all your griefs into a bundle, and set them on fire with a spark from God's altar. The same prescription that cured the sorrow of the disciples will cure all your heartaches. I have read that when Godfrey and his army marched out to capture Jerusalem, as they came over the hills, at the first flash of the pinnacles of that beautiful city, the army that had marched in silence lifted a shout that made the earth tremble. Oh, you soldiers of Jesus Christ, marching on toward heaven, I would that to-day, by some gleam from the palace of God's mercy and God's strength, you might be lifted into great rejoicing, and that before this service is ended you might raise one glad hosanna to the Lord!

In the first place, I commend the behavior of these disciples to all those in this audience who are sinful and unpardoned. There comes a time in almost every man's history when he feels from some source that he has an erring nature. The thought may not have such a lift as to fell him. It may be only like the flash in an evening cloud just after a very hot summer day. One man to get rid of that impression will go to prayer; another will stimulate himself by ardent spirits, and another man will dive deeper in secularities. But sometimes a man cannot get rid of these impressions. The fact is, when a man finds out that his eternity is poised upon a perfect uncertainty, and that the next moment his foot may slip, he must do something violent to make himself forget where he stands, or else fly for refuge.

If there are any here who have resolved that they would rather die of this awful cancer of sin than to have the heavenly surgeon cut it out, let me say, my dear brother, you mingle for yourself a bitter cup. You fly in the face of your everlasting interests. You crouch under a yoke and you bite the dust, when, this moment, you might rise up a crowned conqueror. Driven and perplexed as I know you are by sin, go and tell Jesus. To relax the grip of death from your soul, and plant your unshackled feet upon the golden throne, Christ let the tortures of the bloody mount transfix Him. With the beam of His own cross He will break down the door of your dungeon. From the thorns of His own crown He will pick enough gems to make your brow blaze with eternal victory. In every tear on His wet cheek; in every gash of His side; in every long, blackening mark of laceration from shoulder to shoulder; in the grave-shattering, heaven storming death groan, I hear Him say: "Him that cometh unto Me, I will in no wise cast out."

"Oh," but you say, "instead of curing my wound you want to make another wound, namely: That of conviction!" Have you never known a surgeon to come and find a chronic disease, and then with sharp caustic burn it all out? So the grace of God comes to the old sore of sin. It has long been rankling there, but by divine grace it is burned out through these fires of conviction; "the flesh coming again as the flesh of a little child;" "where sin abounded grace much more aboundeth." With the ten thousand unpardoned sins of your life, go and tell Jesus. You will never get rid of your sins in any other way: and remember that the broad invitation which I extend to you will not always be extended.

King Alfred, before modern time-pieces were invented, used to divide the day into three parts, eight hours each, and then had three wax candles. By the time the first candle had burned to the socket, eight hours had gone, and when the second candle had burned to the socket, another eight hours had gone, and when all the three candles were gone out, then the day had passed. Oh, that some of us instead of calculating our days, and nights, and years by any earthly timepiece, might calculate them by the numbers of opportunities and mercies which are burning down and burning out, never to be relighted, lest at last we be amid the foolish virgins who cried: "Our lamps have gone out!"

Again: I commend the behavior of the disciples to all who are tempted. I have heard men in mid-life say they had never been led into temptation. If you have not felt temptation it is because you have not tried to do right. A man hoppled and handcuffed, as long as he lies quietly, does not test the power of the chain; but when he rises up, and with the determination resolves to snap the handcuff or break the hopple, then he finds the power of the iron. And there are men who have been for ten, and twenty, and thirty years bound hand and foot by evil habits who have never felt the power of the chain, because they have never tried to break it. It is very easy to go on down with the stream and with the wind, lying on your oars; but just turn round, and try to go against the wind and the tide, and you will find it is a different matter. As long as we go down the current of our evil habit we seem to get along quite smoothly; but if after a while we turn around and head the other way, toward Christ, and pardon, and heaven, oh, then, how we have to lay to the oars. You all have your temptation. You have one kind, you another, you another, not one person escaping.

It is all folly for you to say to some one: "I could not be tempted as you are." The lion thinks that it is so strange that the fish should be caught with a hook. The fish thinks it is so strange that the lion should be caught with a trap. You see some man with a cold, phlegmatic temperament, and you say: "I suppose that man has not any temptation." Yes, as much as you have. In his phlegmatic nature he has a temptation to indolence and censuriousness and over-eating and drinking; a temptation to ignore the great work of life; a temptation to lay down an obstacle in the way of all good enterprises. The temperment decides the styles of temptation; but sanguine or lymphatic, you will have temptation. Satan has a grappling-hook just fitted for your soul. A man never lives beyond the reach of temptation. You say when a man gets to be twenty or eighty years of age he is safe from a Satanic assault. You are very much mistaken. A man at eighty-five years of age has as many temptations as a man at twenty-five. They are only different styles of temptation.

Ask the aged Christian whether he is never assaulted of the powers of darkness. If you think you have conquered the power of temptation, you are very much mistaken.

A man who wanted a throne pretended he was very weak and sickly, and if he was elevated he would soon be gone. He crawled upon his crutches to the throne, and having attained it he was strong again. He said: "It was well for me while I was looking for the keys of authority that I should stoop, but now that I have found them, why should I stoop any longer?" and he threw away his crutches and was well again.

How illustrative the power of temptation! You think it is a weak and crippled influence; but give it a chance, and it will be a tyrant in your soul, it will grind you to atoms. No man has finally and for ever overcome temptation until he has left the world. But what are you to do with these temptations? Tell everybody about them? Ah, what a silly man you would be! As well might a commander in a fort send word to the enemy which gate of the castle is least barred, as for you to go and tell what all your frailties are, and what your temptations are. The world will only scoff at you. What then must a man do? When the waves strike him with terrific dash shall he have nothing to hold on to? In this contest with "the world, the flesh, and the devil," shall a man have no help, no counsel?

Our text intimates something different. In those eyes that wept with the Bethany sisters I see shining hope. In that voice which spake until the grave broke and the widow of Nain had back her lost son, and the sea slept, and sorrow stupendous woke up in the arms of rapture—in that voice I hear the command and the promise: "Cast thy burden on the Lord, and He will sustain thee." Why should you carry your burdens any longer? Oh, you weary soul, Christ been in this conflict. He says: "My grace shall be sufficient for you. You shall not be tempted above that you are able to bear." Therefore, with all your temptations, go, as these disciples did, and tell Jesus.

Again: I commend the behavior of the disciples to all those who are abused and slandered and persecuted. When Herod put John to death, the disciples knew that their own heads were not safe. And do you know that every John has a Herod? There are persons in life who do not wish you very well. Your misfortunes are honeycombs to them. Through their teeth they hiss at you, misinterpret your motives, and would be glad to see you upset. No man gets through life without having a pummelling. Some slander comes after you, horned and tusked and hoofed, to gore and trample you; and what are you to do? I tell you plainly that all who serve Christ must suffer persecution. It is the worst sign in the world for you to be able to say: "I haven't an enemy in the world." A woe is pronounced in the Bible against the one of whom everybody speaks well. If you are at peace with all the world, and everybody likes you and approves your work, it is because you are an idler in the Lord's vineyard, and are not doing your duty.

All those who have served Christ, however eminent, have been maltreated at some stage of their experience. You know it was so in the time of George Whitefield, when he stood and invited men into the kingdom of God. What did the learned Dr. Johnson say of him? He pronounced him a miserable mountebank. How was it when Robert Hall stood and spoke as scarcely any uninspired man ever did speak of the glories of Heaven? and as he stood Sabbath after Sabbath preaching on these themes his face kindled with the glory. John Foster, a Christian man, said of this man: "Robert Hall is only acting, and the smile on his face is a reflection of his own vanity." John Wesley turned all England upside down with Christian reform, and yet the punsters were after him, and the meanest jokes in England were perpetrated about John Wesley. What is true of the pulpit is true of the pew; it is true of the street, it is true of the shop, and the store. All who will live godly in Christ Jesus must suffer persecution.

And I set it down as the very worst sign in all your Christian experience if you are, any of you, at peace with all the world. The religion of Christ is war. It is a challenge to "the world, the flesh and the devil;" and if you will buckle on the whole armor of God, you will find a great host dispating your path between this and heaven. But what are you to do when you are assaulted and slandered and abused, as I suppose nearly all of you have been in your life? Go out and hunt up the slanderer? Oh, no, silly man! While you are explaining away a falsehood in one place, fifty people will just have heard of it in other places.

I counsel you to another course. While you are not to omit any opportunity of setting yourselves right, I want to tell you this morning of one who had the hardest things said about Him, whose sobriety was disputed, whose mission was scouted, whose companionship was denounced, who was pursued as a babe and spit upon as a man, who was howled at after He was dead. I will have you go unto Him with your bruised soul, in some humble, child-prayer, saying: "I see Thy wounds—wounds of head, wounds of feet, wounds of heart. Now, look at my wounds, and see what I have suffered, and through what battles I am going; and I entreat Thee, by those wounds of Thine, sympathize with me. And he will sympathize, and He will help. Go and tell Jesus!

Again: I commend the behavior of the disciples to all who may have been bereaved. How many in garb of mourning! If you could stand at this point where I am standing and look off upon this audience, how many signals of sorrow you would behold. God has His own way of taking apart a family. We must get out of the way for coming generations. We must get off the stage that others may come on, and for this reason there is a long procession reaching down all the time into the valley of shadows.

This emigration from time into eternity is so vast an enterprise, that we cannot understand it. Every hour we hear the clang of the sepulchral gate. The sod must be broken. The ground must be ploughed for resurrection harvest. Eternity must be peopled. The dust must press our eyelids. "It is appointed unto all men once to die." This emigration from time into eternity keeps three-fourths of the families of the earth in desolation. The air is rent with farewells, and the black-tasselled vehicles of death rumble through every street.

The body of the child that was folded so closely to the mother's heart is put away in the cold and the darkness. The laughter freezes to the girl's lip, and the rose scatters. The boy in the harvest field of Shunam says: "My head! my head!" and they carry him home to die on the lap of his mother. Widowhood stands with tragedies of woe struck into the pallor of the cheek. Orphanage cries in vain for father and mother. Oh, the grave is cruel! With teeth of stone, it clutches for its prey. Between the closing gates of the sepulchre, our hearts are mangled and crushed. Is there any earthly solace? None. We come to the obsequies, we sit with the grief-stricken, we talk pathetically to their soul; but soon the obsequies have passed, the carriages have left us at the door, the friends who stayed for a few days are gone, and the heart sits in desolation, listening for the little feet that will never again patter through the hall, or looking for the entrance of those who will never come again—sighing into the darkness ever and anon coming across some book or garment, or little shoe or picture, that arouses former association, almost killing the heart.

Long days and nights of suffering that wear out the spirit, and expunge the bright lines of life, and give haggardness to the face, and draw the flesh tight down over the cheek-bone, and draw dark lines under the sunken eye, and the hand is tremulous, and the voice is husky and uncertain, and the grief is wearing, grinding, accumulating, exhausting.

Now, what are such to do? Are they merely to look up into a brazen and unpitying heaven? Are they to walk a blasted heath unfed of stream, unsheltered by overarching trees? Has God turned us out on the barren common to die? Oh, no! no! no! He has not. He comes with sympathy and kindness and love. He understands all our grief. He sees the height, and the depth, and the length, and the breadth of it. He is the only one that can fully sympathize. Go and tell Jesus. Sometimes when we have trouble we go to our friends and we explain it, and they try to sympathize; but they do not understand it. They cannot understand it. But Christ sees all over it, and all through it. He not only counts the tears and records the groans, but before the tears started, before the groans began, Christ saw the inmost lodging-place of your sorrow; and He takes it, and He weighs it, and He measures it, and He pities it with an all-absorbing pity. Bone of our bone. Flesh of our flesh. Heart of our heart. Sorrow of our sorrow.

As long as he remembers Lazarus's grave He will stand by you in the cemetery. As long as He remembers His own heart-break, He will stand by you in the laceration of your affections. When He forgets the foot-sore way, the sleepless nights, the weary body, the exhausted mind, the awful cross, the solemn grave, then He will forget you, but not until then.

Often when we were in trouble we sent for our friends; but they were far away, they could not get to us. We wrote to them "Come right away," or telegraphed: "Take the next train." They came at last, yet were a great while in coming, or perhaps were too late. But Christ is always near—before you, behind you, within you. No mother ever threw her arms around her child with such warmth and ecstasy of affection as Christ has shown towards you. Close at hand—nearer than the staff upon which you lean, nearer than the cup you put to your lip, nearer than the handkerchief with which you wipe away your tears—I preach him an ever-present, all sympathizing, compassionate Jesus. How can you stay away one moment from Him with your griefs? Go now. Go and tell Jesus.

It is often that our friends have no power to relieve us. They would very much like to do it; but they cannot disentangle our finances; they cannot cure our sickness and raise our dead; but glory be to God that He to whom the disciples went has all power in heaven and on earth, and at our call He will balk our calamities, and, at just the right time, in the presence of an applauding earth and a resounding heaven, will raise our dead. He will do it. He is mightier than Herod. He is swifter than the storm. He is grander than the sea. He is vaster than eternity. And every sword of God's omnipotence will leap from its scabbard, and all the resources of infinity be exhausted, rather than that God's child shall not be delivered when he cries to him for rescue.

Suppose your child was in trouble; how much would you endure to get him out? You would go through any hardship. You would say: "I don't care what it will cost. I must get him out of that trouble."

Do you think God is not so good a father as you? Seeing you are in trouble, and having all power, will He not stretch out His arm and deliver you? He will. He is mighty to save. He can level the mountain and divide the sea, and can extinguish the fire and save the soul. Not dim of eye, not weak of arm, not feeble of resources, but with all eternity and the universe at His feet. Go and tell Jesus. Will you? Ye whose cheeks are wet with the night-dew of the grave; ye who cannot look up; ye whose hearts are dried with the breath of a sirocco; in the name of the religion of Jesus Christ, which lifts every burden, and wipes away every tear, and delivers every captive, and lightens every darkness, I emplore you now, go and tell Jesus.

A little child went with her father, a sea Captain, to sea, and when the first storm came the little child was very much frightened, and in the night rushed out of the cabin and said: "Where is father? where is father?" Then they told her: "Father is on deck guiding the vessel and watching the storm." The little child immediately returned to her berth and said: "It's all right, for father's on deck." Oh, ye who are tossed and driven in this world, up by the mountains and down by the valleys, and at your wit's end, I want you to know the Lord God is guiding the ship. Your Father is on deck. He will bring you through the darkness into the harbor. Trust in the Lord. Go and tell Jesus. Let me say that if you do not, you will have no comfort here, and you will forever be an outcast and a wanderer. Your death will be a sorrow. Your eternity will be a disaster.

But if you go to Him for pardon and sympathy, all is well. Everything will brighten up, and joy will come to the heart and sorrow will depart; your sins will be forgiven and your foot will touch the upward path; and the shining messengers that report above what is done here will tell it until the great [illegible] if now, with contrition and full trustfulness of soul, you will only go and tell Jesus.

But I am oppressed, when I look over this audience, at the prospect that some may not take this counsel, and go away unblessed. I cannot help asking: What will be the destiny of these people? So I never care whether it come into the text or not, I never leave my place on this platform without telling them that now is the accepted time, and to some, perhaps, the last time.

Xerxes looked off on his army. There were two million men—perhaps the finest army ever marshaled. Xerxes rode along the lines, reviewed them, came back, stood on some high point, looked off upon the two million men, and burst into tears. At that moment, when everybody supposed he would be in the greatest exultation, he broke down in grief. They asked him why he wept. "Ah," he said, "I weep at the thought that so soon all this host will be dead." So I stand looking off upon this host of immortal men and women, and realize the fact, as perhaps no man can, unless he has been in similar position, that soon the places which know you now will know you no more, and you will be gone—whither? whither? There is a stirring idea which the poet put in very peculiar verse when he said:

"'Tis not for man to trifle; life is brief,
And sin is here;
Our age is but a falling leaf—
A dropping tear.
Not many lives, but only one have we—
One, only one;
How sacred should that one life ever be—
That narrow span."

Corn. Select varieties sure to mature in a short season. Mixing the seed of several kinds, ripening at near the same time, certainly increases the crop. Plant early, and near or far apart, in proportion to the richness of the land, but not too close.—Roots. It will not do to delay sowing parsnips. If it comes hot they will burn up. Sugar-beets, mangles and carrots will bear sowing later, but the crop is hurt. Get as long a season for roots as possible. On clean ground flat culture is admissible, but where there are many weeds all kinds of roots should be sowed on rolled ridges, over plenty of manure. Potatoes planted in May generally do well; they may be safely cut to two or three eyes to the set.—Soiling crops. In some localities oats and peas may be sowed. Use any leafy kind of oats, and if the soil is rich, Marrowfat peas. They give twice as good a crop as Canada peas, though those are best on poor soil. | Sow corn in drills; as a stand-by sweet corn is the best. One bushel to the acre will give best results on rich land, and never put corn on other—you waste your time. Repeat sowings.

New asparagus beds should be very sparingly cut the second year after planting. Early weeding is important with root crops; keep the spaces between clean by the use of the hand-cultivator in small gardens, and a horse implement in large ones. Cut the plants with a sharp hoe, leaving them in little clusters six or eight inches apart in the row. These clusters may be thinned later to leave but a single plant in a place. Succession crops should be provided for my sowing spinach, lettuce, sweet corn, etc., every week or ten days. In the scarcity of pea brush, a wire trellis is the best and most cheaply made substitute.

LADIES' DEPARTMENT.

Counting Up the Cost.

The average housewife seldom stops to calculate the cost of the several articles she prepares for the table day after day. She goes through her work, making bread, pies, tea, coffee and never knows the cost of any of them. She knows that eggs are so much a dozen and butter such and such a price, and that a barrel of flour takes $6 or $8 out of the exchequer, but she has never calculated the cost of one single article, or what the price of a dinner or a day's meals may be. Some one has calculated that it costs half of a cent for a cup of coffee, not counting the sugar and milk, and that half a pound of coffee will make thirty-two cups of good coffee.

A Story of Victoria.

One of the first things Queen Victoria did on hearing that William IV. was dead and that she had succeeded to the throne was to call one of her mother's ladies-in-waiting. "Am I really queen?" asked the excited Princess.

"You are, indeed, madam," replied the lady-in-waiting.

"And I can do what I choose by right?" continued Victoria.

"Certainly, your Majesty."

"Then get me a cup of green tea. Mamma never would let me have it; now I mean to know what harm it can do me." And the young Queen drank three cups, had a violent fit of the shivers, and has never liked tea since.

Athletic Women.

The women are doing more, perhaps, to make themselves healthy and pretty than they ever did or had a chance to do in modern times before. Horseback riding, rowing, swimming, walking, exercising in gymnasiums, sparring, playing games that strengthen muscles and develop forms, and studying hygiene—with as little study and as much fun as possible—are some of their devices. Why, the young women are undergoing a revolution! Their mothers don't know what to make of them—though candor compels the admission that a great many of the mothers are paying as much attention to the subject as any one—except that they may not all have the new science down as finely as that lily of the stage who is described in the provincial papers as taking a cold bath every morning to preserve her health, washing her face with cold cream instead of water so as to avoid wrinkles, and walking like a postman to keep herself muscular.—[N. Y. Sun.

What Women Didn't Know.

I thought women knew everything about everything. But they don't. I don't like to tell this story. It is a kind of give away. They were three or four ladies enjoying that afternoon time when all the gossip is manufactured and made up in packages to be delivered around town. They were having a charming time when the Chinese boy walked into their midst, holding in his hand a box of paste of some kind. He handed it to the lady of the house with the laconic remark: "Man down there sell 'em." They all grabbed for the box. "What was it?" said one. "I don't know," said the other, "but it's paste." "I know," said the hostess; "Its that new complexion paste we were reading about; don't you remember? It must be that." "It must be good; let's try it." So one of them took a good big dab of it and put it on her cheek, and another put some on her chin, and another on her forehead. They all began to squirm. The first one's cheek was all drawn up, and she could only speak out of the side of her mouth; the third one's eyelids were pulled up so that she could not shut them. "Well, I never! We don't want any of that, anyway; John, take it away, take it away, quick; tell the man we don't want it." The Chinaman departed, and found the peddler sitting on the front steps. The peddler rose up. "Well," he said, "I'm glad you've come back; I thought you were cleaning all the silverware in the house with it."—[San Francisco Chronicle.

A Model of Her Sex.

The aristocratic Creole lady, says a New Orleans letter, is often a model for the imitation of her sex. She is an obedient and respectful daughter, a faithful wife and a devoted mother. She is soft of speech, and has a grace of manner which gives a charm to all she does. Well educated and accomplished, with keen wit, she makes a brilliant figure in society, but is nevertheless an excellent manager of her household, and gives a most careful supervision to every detail that will enhance the comfort of her lord. She looks diligently after the physical and intellectual welfare of her children; especially are her daughters trained under her own eyes in all that goes to make woman lively in mind and person. Their tasks for school are conned by her side, their music lessons are practiced within her hearing, that she may detect the least false note. She shares in all their amusements, she is their companion, their confident, their friend. They come to her with all their little hopes and fears, sure of her sympathy. When her daughter is grown the Creole matron bloom again into a rich second youth; her own girlhood is renewed in that of her child; they are scarcely mother and daughter any longer, but a pair of loving sisters. The young girl is educated in a convent and leads a secluded existence until she is launched in society, and then, in the new, joyous life that bursts upon her she is always surrounded by the same watchful care that guided her childhood. Young girls are not allowed to go into society without being accompanied by their mothers or some other married lady, as chaperone—one of the many Creole customs which has been generally adopted by the American residents of New Orleans.

New Uses for Ribbons.

The ridiculous custom of decorating every available object in the house with bows of ribbon has extended even to candles—not the kitchen candles, of course, but those intended for bedroom and parlor. The ribbons are of any color that may happen to please the eye of the mistress of the house, and are attached to the candle close to the candlestick, where naturally enough they produce a most imposing effect. It is perhaps unnecessary to state that this kind of candle is not intended to be used. On the other hand it is permissible to eat one's dinner roll, which is likewise adorned with a ribbon fastened about it. There is some consolation in this fact. Doubtless, however, we may soon be treated to the enchanting spectacle of a sirloin of beef with a broad satin sash wound round its middle, or perhaps a roast chicken garnished with a brilliant cravat; in fact, devices of this kind admit of no limitations.

Speaking of ribbons, it is noticeable that the number of scarfs and draperies in the drawing room is rapidly diminishing. It has become possible to sit in a chair without undergoing the torture of having the back of one's neck scratched by tinsel embroidery, while the voluminous fold of silk and linen that once swathed the sofa and dangled over the edge of the piano are now hardly to be seen in fashionable houses. A few fine embroideries give a striking and artistic appearance to a room, but their employment should be regulated by the ordinary rules of common sense that unfortunately are not displayed in every household. To take a long scarf, tie a great knot in the centre and pin it to the back of a couch with the ends outspread like the wings of a gigantic bat has naught to do with either beauty or art.

But is a curious fact that to abandon one absurd fashion means, generally speaking, to adopt another equally nonsensical. Hence, we cast aside meaningless draperies and come to—candle and bread bows.—[Mail and Express.

Fashion Notes.

The leading color of the season is gray.

Double strings are seen on the new bonnets.

Lace straws are much used in trimming hats and bonnets.

A new checked cashmere is sold under the name of Rowena.

Green, silver grays, and heliotrope seem to be the favorite colors for millinery.

Habit cloths take precedent of all others for covert coats and walking jackets.

Cordurette is another ribbed cloth added to the bit of corduroys and cordelines.

Silk on account of its dust shedding qualities is coming into revived favor for street suits.

Braided jackets are considered dressy enough for afternoon, carriage and promenade wear.

Black, fawn, tan and gray gloves are all fashionably worn with street, carriage and visiting costumes.

Norfolk blouses and Epsom covert coats are much worn for travelling, excursions and in the country.

Dull black surahs and other non-lustrous black silks are regaining popularity for street and utility wear.

Jetted fabrics of all kinds are worn this season either for the corsage or for trimming, and are in great variety.

The old fashion of wearing spenser waists is revived, and they are seen in silk as well as in cashmeres of bright shades, finished with a stitching in colored floss silks.

Pretty little turbans, rather than toques are worn with spring cheviot suits made of the same fabric as the costume, but they should be made carefully not to look bungling.

Corduroy vests of fine ribbed white corduroy are very stylish with almost any costume. The buttons of silver gilt are so fastened that they can be taken off in case of washing the garment.

Smooth fabrics are being introduced this season for street costumes for spring wear. Poplins, taffetas and alpacas are very stylish. The latter are trimmed with watered ribbons in great quantity and are as stylish as anything in the newest models.

Reds and the very pretty shades of violet and lilac are very becoming in the new sateens and the flower designs are very graceful. A more useful dress than a fine French sateen has not been discovered.

CHILDREN'S COLUMN.

How to be Happy.

Are you almost disgusted
With life, little man?
I will tell you a wonderful trick
That will bring you contentment
If anything can.
Do something for somebody, quick,
Do something for somebody, quick,

Are you awfully tired
With play, little girl?
Weary, discouraged and sick
I'll tell you the loveliest
Game in the world.
Do something for somebody, quick,
Do something for somebody, quick.

Though it rains like the rain
Of the flood, little man,
And the clouds are forbidding and black,
You can make the sun shine
In your soul, little man.
Do something for somebody quick,
Do something for somebody quick.

Though the skies are like brass
Overhead, little girl,
And the wall like a well heated brick;
And are earthly affairs
In a terrible whirl.
Do something for somebody, quick,
Do something for somebody, quick.

About Cat's Cradle.

I suppose most of you have played at cat's cradle—that interesting string and finger game. Let me tell you, however, that it has nothing to do with pussy, though you will doubtless be surprised to hear it. The words are really meant for cratch (or manger) cradle, in allusion to the cradle in which the infant Jesus lay.—[Little Folks.

Decisions.

"I can't decide," says the raindrop as it comes down, "whether I will fall on the meadow, or in that garden among the flowers, or out on the wide ocean. I can't make up my mind."

"I can't decide," says the streamlet as it rushes out of the mountain, "whether I will flow toward the great river yonder, or whether I will go straight down the valley and into the sea at once."

"There is plenty of time for me," says a young girl as she comes away from the Bible-class on Sunday afternoon. "Teacher wants us to decide at once, but surely there is no hurry. I must think about it some day I know; but not now; I can't decide."

But the raindrop comes on, and so does the streamlet; while they are hesitating they are coming on, on, somewhere. Presently it is too late to choose. They would not decide in time, and now it is no use deciding. They have gone too far; they cannot change their course now.

Take care, young people! take care, boys and girls! Your life is just like that rushing stream. You do not decide the way your life shall go, but all the time it is going on. Is it going toward heaven? Have you thought? Will you not decide at once which way it shall go? If you do not choose now, the time may soon come when you cannot choose.

Dragons' Bones.

In the folk-lore of many of the tribes that live along the borders of Northern and Eastern Asia are found tales quite as marvelous and wonderful as those handed down to the boys and girls of the warmer and more civilized countries of the South, in which fairies, heroic giants and gods are the principal figures—the offspring of vivid tropical imaginations. But in the tales related to the children of the far-away ice country, the main characters are gigantic animals and monsters of strange appearance; and as the northern story-tellers are not noted for their imaginative powers, we are led to look for some solid foundation of fact upon which the originators of the myths must have built their wondrous tales. The Chinese legends abound in dragons and unicorns; and in Canton, to-day, may be purchased "dragons' bones and teeth," which form part of the regular stock of the native druggists.

In the "Chinese Repository" is a quotation from Li She Chan, the author of a Chinese medical book. He says, concerning dragons' bones:

"The bones are found on banks of rivers and in caves of the earth, places where the dragon died, and can be collected at any time."

In the far north, "dragons' bones" were very common, but they were usually considered there to have belonged to gigantic birds. To prove their belief, the natives showed the claws, three or four feet long, of these monsters which, if they had ever existed, must have far exceeded in size the roc of the "Arabian Knights." Quaint tales of these were told on winter evenings, perhaps, to native boys and girls; and little reason had the children to doubt them, for the claws were so plentiful that their fathers used them, as the Chukches of Eastern Siberia do strips of whalebone, to make their bows, which they use for hunting, more elastic.

Finally, an English naturalist, while studying Chinese folk-lore, made the discovery that the "dragon's bones and teeth" were no more or less than the remains of a great extinct rhinoceros. Soon after, a scientist traveling in Northern Siberia heard the natives talking about the gigantic birds I have just mentioned, and being shown a "claw," he saw that it, too, was in reality a horn of a monster rhinoceros that in past ages had lived in that far-off land of ice.—